

Middletown School Readiness Council

12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

Wednesday, March 20, 2012

Wilbert Snow School

299 Wadsworth St.

Middletown, CT 06457

RECEIVED

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TOWN CLERK

MIDDLETOWN, CONN.

Members Present: Betsy Morgan, Christine Fahey, Sheila Daniels, Wendy Berling, Donna Marino, Susan Macary, Ann Perzan, Alice Torres, Jerome Long, and Ed Bonilla, Susan Sienkiewicz, Liz Fraser. Also Present: Patrice Nelson.

I. Welcome & Call to Order: Betsy Morgan called the meeting to order at 12:09. Introductions were made.

II. Announcements: Donna Marino distributed flyers for the upcoming PEP eight-week program (in Spanish) beginning on April 2nd. The next PEP offering will be (in English) in the fall. She announced that this month's MSA meeting will be held on Monday, March 25th. Pupil Services Director Ann Perzan will be the guest speaker along with a representative from the Special Education Parent Teacher Association (SEPTA) who will speak on special education issues. She also distributed MSA flyers for an upcoming event "Community Conversation about the Achievement Gap with Keynote Speaker, Secretary of State, Denise Merrill". Parent Leadership is co-sponsoring this event at Middlesex Community College along with Middlesex United Way. Chris circulated professional development announcements for several upcoming conferences and workshops: *Spring Workshops* at the School for Young Children at St. Joseph University in April and May, *Together We Will* conference on April 11th, *Childhood Conversations Conference* on April 12th, *Nurturing Prenatal Parent Program* running from April to June, *Common Core Math Conference* featuring Juanita Copley April 29th and 30th, and the *Early Childhood Literacy Conference* on May 2nd. Ed Bonilla announced that the United Way is sponsoring a youth concert on April 6th to support homelessness and also to engage young people in community issues. This event will be held at the Green Street Arts Center. Christine O'Grady will email the link to new preschool study she thought would interest Council members. Betsy shared a notice of a book "Medical Care and Slavery" written by Gretchen Long, Jerome's daughter. Jerome noted that he read a newspaper article stating that Connecticut ranked 28th in preschool investment. The Family Resource Center will be offering a "Raising Readers" program for child care providers.

III. Acceptance of the Feb. 20, 2012 School Readiness Council meeting:

Alice Torres moved to accept the minutes from the above mentioned date. Wendy Berling seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Financial Report: was distributed, showing an unearned balance of \$15,737. We are on target to spend down the grant.

Allocation of Spaces Update: The one additional space that the Council voted to bid on for Town & Country was not awarded by the state. SDE had \$600,000 in requests for additional spaces and only \$150,000 to allocate. All of the funds were distributed to programs that have never received expansion funds – the Meriden YMCA and Norwich's Family Resource Center.

Report of Children Served: was distributed and showed little change from last month. It was noted that we are seeing an increase in parent fees and Care4Kids funds being collected.

V. Coordinator's Report:

School Readiness Grant RFP: The RFPs have been received from local providers and the Grants Committee will receive them at the close of this meeting. The committee will meet next Wednesday, March 27th to review the applications and develop a recommendation to the Council. Chris thanked the committee members for their commitment to this process.

Kindergarten Kick Start Program Summer 2013: This program will run at Macdonough School and will expand to include a site at the Green Street Arts Center for those children who will enter Farm Hill School. A similar program will run at Snow School run by a kindergarten teacher working toward her administrator's certification.

Quality Enhancement Grant: Is due on April 8th to the Purchasing Dept. at City Hall. The Grants Committee will be apprised if multiple applications come in. Chris will give a written report on the 2012-13 Middletown Early Childhood Network workshop offerings in June, but gave a brief update on workshops to date. CRT is presenting a three part *I am Moving, I Am Learning* workshop in April. Chris noted appreciation to CRT for providing this professional development opportunity. *Circle of Security* overview will be offered by Charlie Slaughter in May and a special education workshop that was offered in December will be repeated for those who missed it in June.

Early Childhood Advocacy Day at the Capitol: was held today. The new Office of Early Childhood proposal was the focus of today's advocacy. It was noted that advocacy for this bill must continue. Chris will send out action alerts as she receives them. The bill is still in the Education Committee.

Parent Fees for School Readiness: SDE is forming another study group to develop a new fee scale that School Readiness and state-funded Child Day Care programs will use. If this new fee scale goes into effect July 1st, it will be problematic for families already registered for the upcoming year. Implementation of the scale only for new families who register after July 1st will be recommended to SDE.

PreK- K Alignment Committee: This committee is developing a pilot playgroup program at Bielefield School for families with children age birth to five. The program will run for four weeks. A flyer has been created and will be distributed to parents at parent conferences next week. They are hoping to replicate this playgroup program at every school in the future in an attempt to get families into schools earlier.

Early Literacy Committee: will develop an action plan to address additional professional development efforts, summer learning loss and chronic absence in preschool programs. The summer bookmobile scheduling is underway and it will make stops at preschool programs this year. This year efforts were focused on preschool and kindergarten. Next year we will begin to include grades one, two and three in some of the focus areas.

Week of the Young Child: packets have been distributed to programs. There will be the annual art show at Russell Library along with Open House activities. Grand Rounds at Middlesex Hospital will be held on April 11th at 8:00 A.M. in North 1 meeting room. Dr. Marlene Swartz will be this year's child focused guest and speak on food marketing to children. Her presentation is titled "Big Food vs. Little Kids".

Annual Community Assessment: Patrice Nelson facilitated our annual community assessment.

VI. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 P.M., with thanks to those in attendance.

The next meeting of the Middletown School Readiness Council will take place on

Wednesday, April 24, 2013

from

12:00 - 1:30 P.M.

at

Wilbert Snow School

299 Wadsworth St.

Middletown, CT 06457

Respectfully Submitted by:
Sheila C. Daniels

